Specifying filter criteria

To enable your account to filter e-mail, you specify desired filtering actions you want **procmail** to take in your .procmailrc which is kept in your home directory; if you do not have such a file, run an editor and create one.

Each filter entry in .procmailrc should have the following format:

[handwritten: List {]

```
:0:
* ^From.*owner-emtex
emtex-mail
```

[handwritten annotations: authorized e-mail address; Folder #1; Folder #2 is junk]

The :0: is needed for ? The second line is the filter match condition. In the above example, * ^From.*owner-emtex matches any mail message with a line that starts with "From" and is followed (possibly with other characters intervening) by the string "owner-emtex". So the following lines would match:

```
From: 12937813@sdjfh.ewoir. owner-emtex
From: owner-emtex@jj.uiuc.edu
```

[Go to next section on filtering e-mail]

[Help home page]

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(Last changed: 14-Nov-1995)

```
# An example .procmailrc file.
# (For more and fancier examples, type 'man procmailex').

# Environment variable set up
# Do not change!

PATH=/usr/bin:/usr/ucb:/bin:/usr/local/bin
MAILDIR=$HOME                  # This is the directory where mail boxes
#DEFAULT=$MAILDIR/mbox         # are stored.
LOGFILE=$MAILDIR/from
LOCKFILE=$HOME/.lockmail

# Don't change anything above this line.


# Filter examples now follow.


# Example 1.

:0:
* ^From.*madonnac
madonna-mail
# Any mail from someone with 'madonnac' in their address will be stored
# in the mail file maddona-mail. Of course, I could change madonna-mail
# to any file name I choose.


# Example 2.
:0:
* ^From.*annoying-guy
/dev/null
# Any mail from annoying-guy gets thrown away without me even seeing
# it!


# Example 3.
:0:
* ^Subject.*music
music-mail
# Any mail with the word music appearing anywhere in the Subject line
# will get put in music-mail.


# Example 4.
:0:
* ^From.*mary
* ^Subject.*love
mary-good-mail
# Any mail from mary with the word 'love' appearing in the Subject:
# line will get put in the file mary-good-mail.


# Example 5.
:0 c
* ^From.*joe
! frank@somewhere.edu
# A copy of any mail from joe will be sent to frank@somewhere.edu.
# Note the c in the first line!!
```

How to filter your e-mail

You receive way too much e-mail and would like the computer to filter and sort your messages for you. For example, you would like all messages from a certain person to go into a separate mail folder, or maybe you want all messages with a certain word in the subject line to be deleted before you see them. Can this be done?

Yes it can. Certain mail programs, for example `elm` or `pine` can do some sorting or filtering, and if you use either you can look at the appropriate documentation for more information. But there is a general purpose mail filtering program called **procmail** which is very powerful and not very difficult to use.

- What does **procmail** do?
- Setting up your account to use **procmail**
- Specifying filter criteria
- An example `.procmailrc` file. [under construction]
- How do I see what mail has arrived in my various mailboxes?
- How do I read one of these files that contains my filtered e-mail? [under construction]
- What is a mail folder?

If you have other questions about mail filtering, please ask one of the consultants or send mail to `help`.

[Help home page]

Help pages maintainer: help-page@math.uiuc.edu

(Last changed: 14-Nov-1995)

What does procmail do?

As each mail message addressed to you is received by the system, the computer looks in your <u>home directory</u> for a file named .procmailrc and if this file exists scans it to see if the mail message meets any of .procmailrc's filter criteria are met. If **procmail** finds that the mail message meets one of the filter criteria in .procmailrc it redirects the message according to the filter criteria's action.

For example, if you were to receive a message from someone with the words *Bowling league* in the Subject line of the message, and your .procmailrc file contained the following lines:

```
:0:
* ^Subject.*bowling league
bowling-mail
```

then that message would be put immediately into the <u>mail folder</u> bowling-mail. Note that you would not receive a message saying that you had new mail because the message never reaches your system mailbox.

A sample <u>.procmailrc file</u> is available with several examples.

[<u>Go to next section on filtering e-mail</u>]

[<u>Help home page</u>]

Help pages maintainer: <u>help-page@math.uiuc.edu</u>

(Last changed: 11-Apr-1996)

Setting up your account to filter e-mail

All you have to do is create a `.procmailrc` file and put filter criteria in it. The system takes care of the rest.

[Go to next section on filtering e-mail]

[Help home page]

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(Last changed: 10-17-95)

Checking what filtered e-mail has arrived

To see what e-mail has arrived and been filtered, change to your home directory (by typing cd) and then type `mailstat from`.

[Go back to filtering home page]

[Help home page]

Help pages maintainer: *help-page@math.uiuc.edu*

(Last changed: 10-17-95)

Mail folders and how to read them

You may not know it, but you can have mail stored in many places: your system mailbox, your mbox, your outgoing mail file, plus numerous other. Each of these places is in reality simply a file called a *mail folder*. To read mail in one of these mail folders, say to read mail in your mbox, you merely type mail -f mbox. If you want to read mail in another mail folder, replace mbox with the name of the folder you want to read. Note that to read the mail in a given folder, you must be in the same directory as that folder.

[Help home page]

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(Last changed: 14-Nov-1995)

.procmailrc

from [*Nick Djurovich*]   [Bookmark Link][Origina

To: exmh-users@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Subject: .procmailrc

From: Nick Djurovich <etlndh@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

Date: Thu, 08 Feb 1996 11:02:34 GMT

```
Hi,
    I've been using procmail to forward my mail to different mailboxes.
I'm having a little trouble with the 'recipes'. Some work and some
don't and I can't see why.

The mails that do not get sorted end up in inbox.

Here is a recipe that works, along with a typical header that
gets forwarded correctly.

recipe :

# Store paul's mail
:w:$MAILDIR/.lock
* ^From.*pcashman
| /usr/local/lib/mh/rcvstore +private/paul


header :

From: pcashman@xxxxxxxxxxxxx
Date: Mon, 29 Jan 96 16:55:56 GMT
To: etlndh@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Here is a recipe that doesn't work along with a header that
does not get forward but ends up in inbox.

recipe :

# Store seanrichardson mails in apstools
:3w:$MAILDIR/.lock
* ^From.*etlsnrn
* ^From.*seanrichardson
* ^From.*etljhan
* ^From.*apsowner
| /usr/local/lib/mh/rcvstore +junk/apstools


header :

Reply-to: seanrichardson <etlsnrn@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
Date: Wed, 7 Feb 96 14:04:00 GMT
To: apstools
From: seanrichardson <etlsnrn@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
```
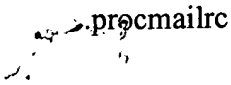
WHY ?

The only thing that I've noticed is that recipes with only the
single default recipe work, whereas any recipe with multiple
recipes don't. Coincidence ?

/Nick

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[More with this subject...]

<Prev in Thread] **Current Thread** **[Next in Thread>**

- **.procmailrc**, *Nick Djurovich* <=

Previous by Date: **More.../Sort by Date**, *Markus Kucborski*
Next by Date: **Re: More.../Sort by Date**, *John Haxby*
Previous by Thread: **More.../Sort by Date**, *Markus Kucborski*
Next by Thread: **maildelivery prob**, *Kevin Fowler*
Indexes: **[Date]** **[Thread]** **[Top]** **[All Lists]**